

Message Text

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FOR SINDELAR FROM AGATTACHE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, CZ, HU

SUBJECT: EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES, POTATOES & ONIONS

REF: FASTO 78

1. POTATOES: (A) HUNGARY: PICKING POTATOES COMPLETED BY END OCT. AND PRELIMINARY FIGURES SUGGEST TOTAL CROP BETWEEN 1.5-1.6 MIL TONS IN 1975 AGAINST 1,480,000 TONS IN 1974. THIS YEAR'S CROP SUFFICIENT MEET DOMESTIC NEEDS AND LEAVES CERTAIN QUANTITIES FOR EXPORT. 1974 IMPORTS WERE 79,000 TONS FOR FOOD FROM POLAND, DDR AND SMALLER QUANTITIES FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THIS YEAR'S PER CAPITA PRODUCTION EXCEEDS 130 KG WHILE PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION IS ONLY 66 KG. BETWEEN 350,000 TO 400,000 TONS OF POTATOES WILL BE USED FOR FEED.

(B) CZECHOSLOVAKIA: COUNTRY'S POTATO CROP WILL BE DOWN BEWEEN 10 TO 15 PERCENT IN 1975 TO ESTIMATED 4,050,000 TONS AGAINST 4,586,000 TONS YEAR EARLIER. HOT WEATHER DURING CRITICAL GROWING SEASON CAUSED DEVELOPMENT SMALL SIZE POTATOES. IN SOME AREAS PARTICULARLY IN CZECHLAND WHICH GROWS ABOUT TWO-THIRDS NATION'S CROP, NIGHT TEMPERATURES WERE SO HIGH POTATO ALMOST "BAKED" IN GROUND. COUNTRY
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USUALLY SELF-SUFFICIENT IN POTATOES BUT THIS YEAR'S

CROP MAY REQUIRE IMPORTS TO COVER DOMESTIC NEEDS.
PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION ABOUT 100 KG PER YEAR AND
USUALLY A LARGE PROPORTION OF CROP USED FOR FEED.

2. ONIONS: (A) HUNGARY IN 1975 WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY
MATCHING 160,000 TONS RED ONIONS PRODUCED IN 1974.
UNFAVORABLE WEATHER, HAILSTORMS AND FLOODS ALREADY
CUT DOWN ON ACREAGE HAVESTED AND CROP TURNED OUT
RELATIVELY POOR. IN MAIN PRODUCING AREAS (MAKO)
20-30 PERCENT OF CROP HAD EXTERNAL DAMAGE AND
HIDDEN (INTERNAL) INFESTATION. REAL PROBLEM
IS STORING. NO ESTIMATE AVAILABLE FOR THE CROP BUT
IS ALMOST CERTAIN IT WILL BE LOWER THAN LAST YEAR'S.
HUNGARY AS TRADITIONAL SURPLUS PRODUCER RED ONIONS
EXPORTED 21,000 TONS IN 1974 AND PROSPECTS ARE THE
1975 CROP WILL CUT DOWN SHARPLY EXPORT AVAILABILITIES.

(B) THERE ARE NO REPORTS AVAILABLE ON CZECHO-
SLOVAKIA'S ONION CROP. HOWEVER IN EASTERN PART
(SLOVAKIA) WHICH IN 1974 PRODUCED ABOUT ONE-THIRD
OF THE NATION'S ESTIMATED 150,000 TON CROP, WEATHER
CONDITIONS WERE ALSO POOR AS IN NEIGHBORING HUNGARY.
IT IS LIKELY PRODUCTION IN 1975 WILL BE SHORT OF
LAST YEAR'S CROP.

3. NO INFO AVAILABLE ON STOCKS.BUCHANAN

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